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A-ARDVARK-VANAHEIM PRÉSENTE

# CEREBUS

57
DEC

$2.50
Side 101

# A Note from the Publisher

I have a few things I want to address this month in this editorial.

One of them is submissions. I am encouraged that there are so many budding artists out there. However, I must ask that you stop sending submissions to me, as I have nowhere to place them. Right now UNIQUE stories is booked solid until February of 1985. Any submissions concerning possible mini-series are simply returned because I have everything I can handle at the moment. I take no pleasure in sending back manuscripts that are sent to me with cheery, hopeful letters. Rejection forms are my least favorite thing to do. So - please - no more. Okay?

Secondly, I would like to answer some questions that keep appearing in the mail. Yes, the buttons that you saw advertised last in Cerebus #49 are still available. If you don't want to order them from England, their US Distributor is Bud Plant and their Canadian distributor is Styx Comics. The address for both of these are in the box to the right, and I highly recommend them as good folks to buy from.

We had plans to try mass-manufacturing the Cerebus stuffed toy, so we could sell them to our distributors, but I have had to cancel that. It seems that mass merchandising is harder than I thought. So spread the word, if you want one you will have to buy it directly from Sheila Watson (see her ad in Cerebus #52)!!

Also - please note that this is the last issue of Cerebus for the current price! Next month we go up to $1.70 (US)/$2.00 (Cdn).

A final note to the folks who have written over the last two months. Thanks for the words of encouragement.

Next month - yea gads - I get to write three editorials, Cerebus, Journey, and normalman!

Stay tuned and we'll see if I really have that much to say. See you in the New Year!

Deni

CEREBUS

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Assistant to the Publisher: Karen McKiel

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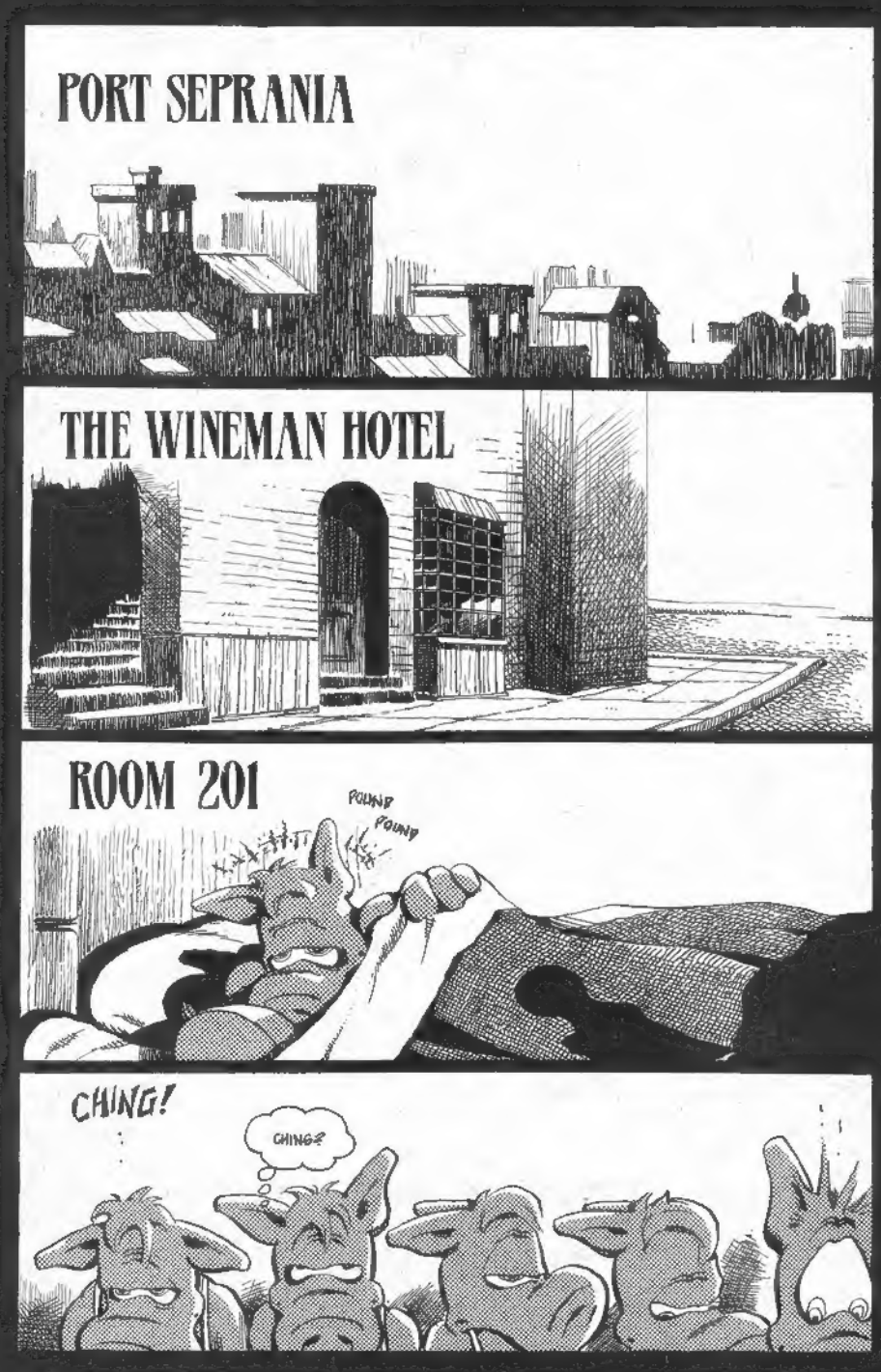

PORT SEPRANIA
THE WINEMAN HOTEL
ROOM 201
POUND
POUND
CHING!
CHING?

# suddenly sophia

MMMMMM
GOOD MORNING DARLING
HOW DO YOU FEEEL..?
...SICK...
WELL, I'M NOT SURPRISED.. I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYONE DRINK TWELVE GALLONS OF GIN AND WHISKEY MIXED WITH GOAT'S MILK!
OOOOOHHH
MIND YOU, SOMEBODY SHOULD BOTTLE IT AS A VIRILITY DRUG
STOP
PLEASE
NO MORE

KNOCK KNOCK
OH, WOW! THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT I KEPT SAYING LAST...
'MORNING, CHILDREN
ARE YOU DECENT?
MISTER WEISSHAUPT! OH, SHER! C'MON IN!
AND HOW ARE THE NEWLYWEDS THIS MORNING?
TERRIBLE! CEREBUS IS

NO!
IT CAN'T BE TRUE!!
I TRUST THE MARRIAGE HAS BEEN...ah...
...LEGITIMIZED...?
HUH?
OH.
THAT.
AT LEAST TWELVE TIMES...
I LOST COUNT AROUND DAWN ...
GOODNESS! WE ARE FULL OF SURPRISES, AREN'T WE?
...CEREBELLA IS GOING TO BE SICK...
YOU LOOK POSITIVELY RADIANT, MY DEAR ...
I'VE NEVER BEEN SO HAPPY, MR. WEISSHAUPT ...
BLEGH

WHOSHAUFT
YOU DID THIS TO CEREBUS ...
I?..
ALL I DID WAS BRING YOU A CHARMING YOUNG LADY FROM YOUR PAST AND SUGGEST SHE MIGHT MAKE YOU A FINE WIFE...
... CEREBUS WAS DRUNK...
TO BE SURE ...
BUT, THEN, WHEN ISN'T "CEREBUS" DRUNK?
NO! ...
CEREBUS COULD NEVER GET THAT DRUNK ...
CEREBUS WAS DRUGGED!

AH.
MY SECRET IS OUT...
I HOPE YOU'LL BELIEVE ME WHEN I SAY THAT I ONLY HAD YOUR BEST INTERESTS AT HEART ...
IT WAS A NICE TRY, WEISSHAUPT... BUT CEREBUS IS LEAVING!!
YOU MAY WISH TO RECONSIDER ...
IF YOU LEAVE, YOU WILL BE IN VIOLATION OF SECTION TWENTY-THREE, SUB-SECTION NINE OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED FELDWAR STATES WHICH SPECIFICALLY PROHIBITS THE DISSOLUTION OF ANY MARRIAGE, BY ANYONE, FOR ANY REASON ...
IN ACCORDANCE WITH SAID SECTION YOU WOULD BE PURSUED BY ALL FEDERAL AND REGIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITIES AND, ONCE CAUGHT, YOU WOULD BE RETURNED TO NEW BEFRA AND HANGED WITHOUT A TRIAL...
HANGED?!

IT WAS MY FEELING THAT THE BEST WAY TO PREVENT THE EROSION OF THE SACRED INSTITUTION OF MARRIAGE WAS TO MAKE DESERTION A CAPITAL OFFENCE...
THAT'S CRAZY! ...
NO DOUBT ...
HOWEVER, THE CHURCH THINKS IT A WONDERFUL IDEA, AND THEY ARE A CORNERSTONE IN MY NEW ALLIANCE...
IT'S NOT REALLY AS ABSOLUTE AS I'M MAKING IT SOUND -- AN UNHAPPY SPOUSE STILL HAS RECOURSE TO PETITION A SPECIFIC BRANCH OF THE GOVERNMENT IF HE WANTS HIS MARRIAGE TERMINATED...
WHAT BRANCH OF THE--
NO.
WAIT.
LET CEREBUS GUESS
THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH.

MORE SPECIFICALLY ..
THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT ..
MR PRESIDENT?
YES, M'BOY?
CEREBUS WANTS TO END HIS MARRIAGE
HMMM!
THAT'S A VERY SERIOUS DECISION ...
ARE YOU SURE YOU'VE THOUGHT IT OVER THOROUGHLY?

OH YES...
CEREBUS HAS ANGUISHED OVER IT FOR WEEKS...
I SEE.
...AND HAVE YOU CONSIDERED HOW THIS MIGHT AFFECT YOUR CAREER?
...
WHAT CAREER?!
WELL, FIRST, YOUR RETURN TO THE EXECUTIVE MANSION IN IEST...
HIS HOLINESS WAS QUITE ADAMANT THAT THE NEW PRIME MINISTER BE A FAMILY MAN...
CEREBUS DOESN'T WANT TO BE PRIME MINISTER
IT WOULD BE STRICTLY TEMPORARY
...
YOU'D MAKE A FEW SPEECHES DENOUNCING ALL OF THIS REPUBLICAN FOOLISHNESS
...
SIGN A FEW EDICTS IN FAVOUR OF GOOD, ORTHODOX TARIMITE THINKING...
NOTHING TOO STRENUOUS
...

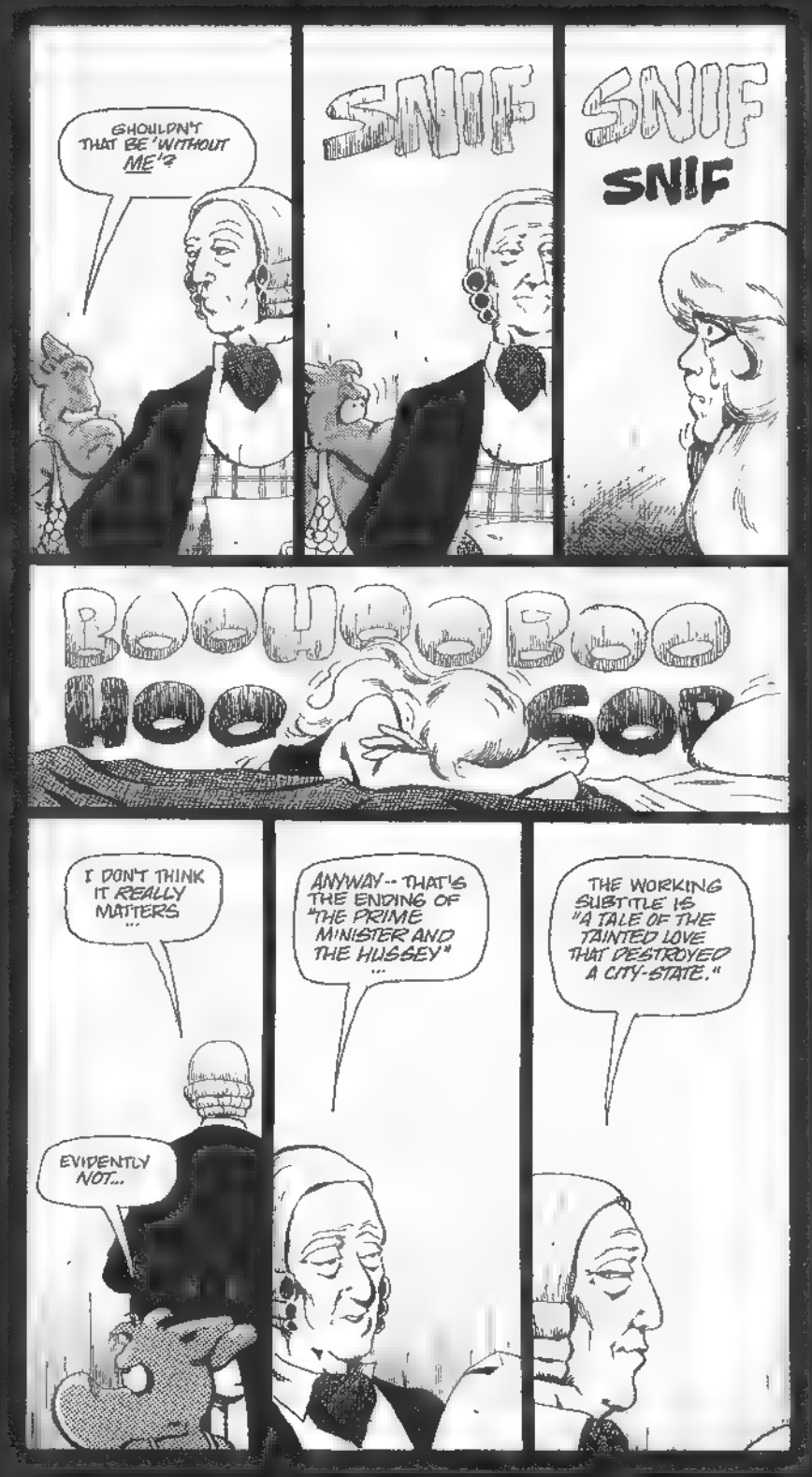
UH-UH!
NO WAY!
FORGET IT!
SINCE YOU'VE MADE UP YOUR MIND, WE MIGHT AS WELL GO AND LOOK AT YOUR HONEYMOON COTTAGE...
ONE OF MY AIDES PICKED IT OUT... HE TELLS ME IT HAS A WALLED-IN SUN PORCH THAT WOULD MAKE AN IDEAL NURSERY...
OH WAOW! YOU'RE JUST THE NICEST MAN IN THE WHOLE ENTIRE WORLD, MR. WEISSHAUPT...
ISN'T HE, CEREBUS, DARLING? ISN'T HE JUST THE MOST NICEST MAN IN THE WHOLE ENTIRE WORLD?
HOW "STRICTLY TEMPORARY" WOULD IT BE? ...

A FEW WEEKS ... MAYBE MORE..
DEPENDS ON HOW LONG IT TAKES TO UNDO YOUR IMAGE AS A CHAMPION OF THE PEASANTS AND LIVESTOCK
SPEECHES AND EDICTS AND THEN YOU'LL DISSOLVE THE MARRIAGE?
NO, THEN YOU START YOUR SECOND CAREER
WRITING STORIES FOR ME TO PUBLISH
WRITING?
YOU MEAN CEREBUS' BOOKS
"ON GOVERNING"? NONO. TOO PROVOCATIVE. WHAT I WANT ARE ROMANCE TRACTS

CIRIN-- OR AS I LIKE TO CALL HER-- "THE COW WHO WALKS LIKE A MAN"-- HAS RUTHLESSLY EXPLOITED THE NEW LITERACY AMONG WOMEN ...
THE POOR THINGS ARE SO CONFUSED, THEY'RE STARTING TO SEE POLITICAL OVERTONES IN DOING LAUNDRY
SO I'VE BEGUN ISSUING THESE TRACTS TO HELP THEM GET BACK TO GOOD, BASIC TRADITIONAL FEMALE VALUES ...
THE STORIES ARE ALL THE SAME. INDEPENDENT WOMAN MEETS MAN EITHER SHE GIVES UP EVERYTHING FOR HIM AND IT ENDS HAPPILY OR SHE STAYS INDEPENDENT AND GOES BLIND..
THE RELUCTA BRIDE

...OR DIES OF CONSUMPTION ...
OR CUTS HER THROAT WITH A CHEESE SLICER...
I READ THAT ONE ...
I RILLY IDENTIFIED WITH HER. 'SPECIALLY WHEN SHE USES THE DOZEN ROSES HE SENDS HER TO FLOG HERSELF..

"THEIR EYES CONVERGED AS ONE"?
YOU SEE? IT'S NOT AS IF I'M ASKING YOU TO WRITE GREAT LITERATURE OR ANYTHING...
WHY DO YOU WANT CEREBUS TO WRITE THIS JUNK AT ALL?
WELL, THERE'LL BE SOME MAJOR DIFFERENCES WITH YOUR TRACTS ...
...THEY'LL ONLY BE SOLD IN FEST, FOR ONE THING ...
HERE.
I JOTTED DOWN A FEW LINES TO GIVE YOU AN IDEA OF WHAT I'M AFTER ...
"'YOU'RE JUST LIKE LORD JUNIUS,' CRIED ASTONIA 'YOU ONLY WANT ME TO COOK AND CLEAN FOR YOU. I'M AN INDEPENDENT WOMAN!'
'THEN,' THE HANDSOME AND WEALTHY AND WELL RESPECTED PRIME MINISTER SAID, SADLY, 'YOU WILL HAVE TO BE INDEPENDENT WITHOUT I!'"


SHOULDN'T THAT BE 'WITHOUT ME'?
SNIF
SNIF
SNIF
BOOHOO BOO HOO SOB
I DON'T THINK IT REALLY MATTERS ...
EVIDENTLY NOT...
ANYWAY -- THAT'S THE ENDING OF "THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE HUSSEY" ...
THE WORKING SUBTITLE IS "A TALE OF THE TAINTED LOVE THAT DESTROYED A CITY-STATE."

THEN YOU WRITE THE SEQUEL "
"CERNEBUS AND SOPHINA"
"A TALE OF THE SELFLESS LOVE THAT SAVED A CITY STATE"
GEE
ITS RELEASE WILL COINCIDE WITH A MASSIVE INJECTION OF FEDERAL FUNDS... A DROP IN INTEREST RATES, A WAGE INCREASE FOR THE IESTAN BUREAUCRACY "
YOU'LL... CO-OPERATE? "
CEREBUS DOESN'T HAVE MUCH CHOICE, DOES HE?
YOU ACQUIESCE IGNOBLY "
I ADMIRE THAT IN AN UNDERLING "
UP TO A POINT...

GENTLEMEN
snip
snip
stitch
stitch
stitch
TUG
tuck
tuck

OOOOH, DARLING! YOU LOOK SO HANDSOME
WHILE WE'RE HERE MR PRESIDENT, WOULD YOU LIKE US TO DO SOME THING WITH THE YOUNG LADY'S...ah..."WARDROBE"
SOPHIA...
THANK YOU, MR. WEISSHAUPT...
NO NEED HESKINS ...
ONE OF THE FIRST RULES OF PUBLIC OFFICE IS TO NEVER CONCEAL YOUR POLITICAL ASSETS
VERY GOOD, MR PRESIDENT

CEREBUS FEELS LIKE A LAWN ORNAMENT ...
READY TO ROLL, HEDGES
YES, SIR, MR PRESIDENT
THE PRESIDENT'S CARRIAGE!
SNAP!
THE PRESIDENT'S CARRIAGE!
THE PRESIDENT'S CARRIAGE
DO YOU EVER DO ANYTHING FOR YOURSELF?
NO..
NO.
WHENEVER I GET THE URGE TO DO SOMETHING I JUST GIVE A FEW ORDERS AND IT GOES AWAY...

CRADLE ROBBER--!
SMACK
SAY! WHAT THE HELL IS--
DON'T SWEAR AT A LADY, YOU SLUG!
SMACK
LET GO! I'M GONNA TEACH 'IM A LESSON!
LET GO!
MR PRIME MINISTER - I DON'T BELIEVE YOU'VE MET SOPHIA'S MOTHER.
SHE'LL BE TRAVELLING WITH US TO IEST
SWELL
next

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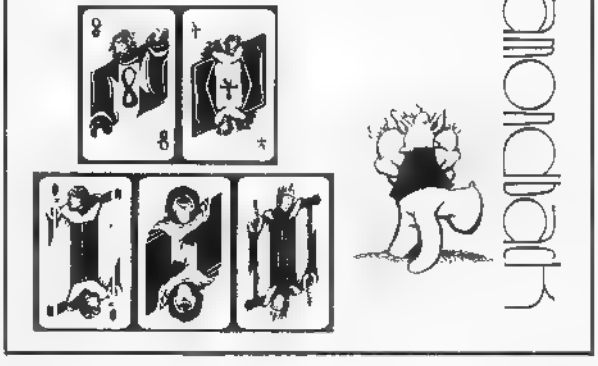


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# A UNIQUE STORY

HE CAME FROM THE VERY *DEPTHS* OF SPACE TO A WORLD HE COULD NOT *STAND!* A WORLD WHERE *EVERYONE* POSSESSED *POWERS* AND *ABILITIES* FAR BEYOND MORTAL MEN! A WORLD CALLED *LEVRAM*, WHERE HE IS KNOWN AS...

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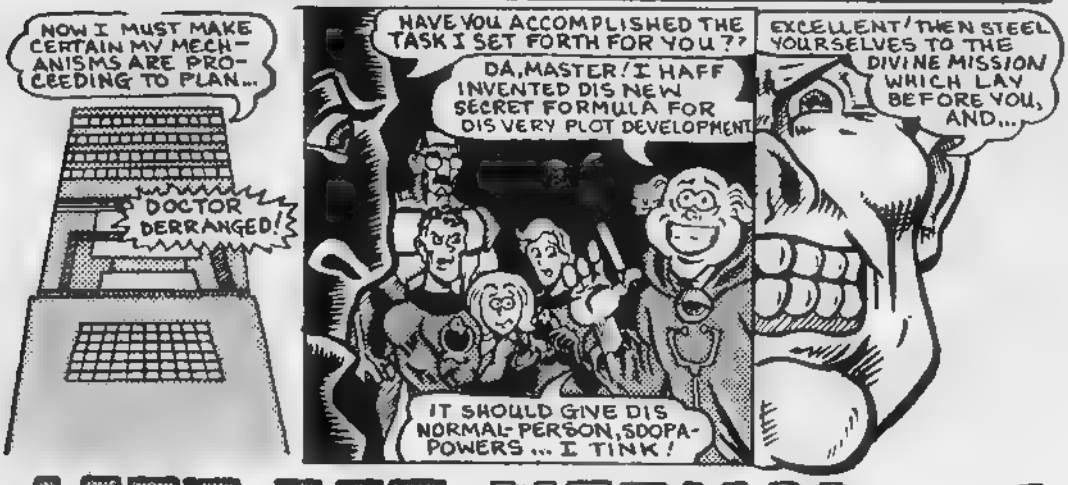
FOR FAR TOO LONG, OUR SOCIETY, OUR VERY *WORLD* HAS BEEN *SUBVERTED* BY THE *WHIMS* OF A MISBEGOTTEN FEW AND THEIR *DUPES*...
...CORRUPTED AGAINST THE *CORPORATE* GOOD YOU AND I REALIZE MUST CONTINUE IF WE ARE TO MOVE *FOWARD* INTO PROSPERITY...

..IT IS FOR THIS PURPOSE THAT I, *THE ULTRA-CONSERVATIVE*, CREATED *YOU*, THE *FANATIC FOUR*..
...FOR IT WAS *I* WHO SENT YOU INTO THAT LONG-ABANDONED SUBWAY TUNNEL...
...WHERE YOU WERE EXPOSED TO THE STRANGE AND UNPREDICTABLE COMIC-RAYS THAT TURNED YOU INTO *MR. FANATICAL*, *HELPLESS WOMAN*, *THE HUMANE TOUCH* AND *THE LUNK!*


NOW I MUST MAKE CERTAIN MY MECHANISMS ARE PROCEEDING TO PLAN...
DOCTOR DERRANGED!
HAVE YOU ACCOMPLISHED THE TASK I SET FORTH FOR YOU??
DA, MASTER! I HAFF INVENTED DIS NEW SECRET FORMULA FOR DIS VERY PLOT DEVELOPMENT
IT SHOULD GIVE DIS NORMAL-PERSON, SDOPA-POWERS... I TINK!
EXCELLENT! THEN STEEL YOURSELVES TO THE DIVINE MISSION WHICH LAY BEFORE YOU, AND...

# LET'S GET NORMAL, man!

..AND JUST WHERE IS THE STAR OF OUR STORY? WHY, HOME IN BED, SLEEPING PEACEFULLY...
... UNTIL...
WINDOW
OH, NO.. NOT AGAIN..
ER-UH, SORRY 'BOUT TH' WINDOW, MR. normalman, SIR. I'LL FIX IT LATER, O.K.?..
WOK MAN
..JUST NOW I'M RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF AN IMPORTANT "ACTION SCENE"!!
YOU MEAN A FIGHT! (SIGH) EVERY DAY ON THIS WORLD IT'S THE SAME OLD THING MEET SOMEONE - PUNCH 'EM INNA FACE! FIGHT! FIGHT! FIGHT!
THAT'S ALL THESE CREATURES SEEM TO DO! NO ONE SITS DOWN FOR A MEANINGFUL CONVERSA...

HEAD'S UP BUNKY!!
KABLOOEY!!
IT'S MURDERLATIN' TIME!!
GREAT ARNOLD! YOU'D THINK JUST ONCE ONE OF THESE LUNK-HEADS WOULD LEARN HOW TO USE A DOOR
AFTER HIM, QUICKLY!! DON'T LET HIM GET AWAY!
YIKES! I DON'T KNOW WHO THESE GUYS ARE - BUT IT LOOKS LIKE THEY MEAN BUSINESS!
I BETTER CALL CAPTAIN EVERYTHING!
BUT WHERE CAN HE GO? THIS IS A FIFTH-FLOOR APARTMENT - AND HE CAN'T FLY!
ZEE-ZEE-ZEE-ZEE-ZEE
WHAT'S THAT AWFUL SOUND?
WHY, IT'S A SIGNAL-WATCH!!
I'M GONNA CREAM THIS LITTLE WHIMP!
YIPES!!
WHY? 'CAUSE IT FILLS UP PAGES...
BUT WHY, LUNK? WHY?
ZEE-ZEE-ZEE-ZEE-ZEE-ZEE
A SIGNAL WATCH? HOO-KAY, THAT DOES IT! NO NEED TA PRETECT MY SECRET IDENTITY NO MORE...
NO, LUNK - WAIT! WE'RE ALREADY ON PAGE THREE OF A FOUR PAGE STORY!!
AN' B'SIDES...
3

..OUR FANS LIKE GRATUITOUS VIOLENCE!
WHAP
ONE PUNCH SENDS normalman FLYING OUT OF THE GAPING HOLE WHICH WAS ONCE HIS WINDOW...
AAAA

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
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# AARDVARK COMMENT

**P.O. BOX 1674, STATION 'C', KITCHENER, ONTARIO N2G 4R2**

Okay, no black roses. I mean, so long as you keep putting out quality *Cerebus*, hey, what business of ours is your personal life, right? It's not as if either of you were in danger of being shipped off to Beirut and not coming back, right?

*Cerebus* 55 has very little substance or humor even to die-hard X-Men fans. To those who read no other comics, it probably made no sense at all.

And ditch the back-up stories. I have yet to see a good one, and they take too much space away from stories which are too short to begin with.

Better luck next time.

*Dian Hardison*
*7215 Rolph, #6*
*Norfolk, VA, 23505*

***I think I would have preferred the black roses.***

* * * * * * * * * * *

Dear Dave and Deni,

Hi, guys. It's been a while since I've had a chance to tell you that *Cerebus* is the best thing since mint chip ice cream (undoubtedly man's most important contribution to the civilized world), so I thought I would write in today and boost your egos a bit more.

Something my girlfriend said about *Cerebus* pinpointed for me exactly what it is that sets the book up on a level all its own: she said, "It's not dumb." I do not find my intelligence insulted when I am reading *Cerebus*, as I do when I read almost every other book on the stands (*Ronin* and *American Flagg* are the only two exceptions). The book makes me think, and the humor is on a much higher level than that of any book. It is mature.

Because of the maturity *Cerebus* is an extremely daring and innovative book for today's market, which prefers to have its stories predigested and spoon-fed to it. You are dealing with a public that chooses "The Dukes of Hazzard" to "Hill Street Blues", and that chooses "Road Warrior" to "Ghandi", and I commend you on your willingness to spurn even greater commercial success in favor of doing what amounts to a true work of art.

And before I go, one more thing. It is very difficult for me to say this, considering the trauma that it will cause my family, but I feel that the time has come to reveal the truth.

Mike Bannon's real name is... Mike Denn. My parents adopted Mike at the tender age of two, after he had fallen out of the back of a flatbed truck in a small western town. Mike displayed quite a bit of his bizarre wit when he was a little tyke, occasionally throwing our goldfish down the garbage disposal and tying up the babysitter --- but nothing too serious.

Eventually, though, Mike became disillusioned with our small-town mideast ideals, and decided to move out. He originally planned to change his name to Mike Abdul-Mohammed, but later settling on Mike Bannon. The last we heard of him, he was working as a quality management official at a frozen dessert factory.

If I may speak to Mike, then, through your letters page... please come home, Mike. We all miss you and love you, and besides, it's been your turn to take the garbage out for about five years.

Best Wishes,

*Matt Denn*

***We have just received word from Rob and Derek that the next issue of the Mike Bannon Fan Club Newsletter will feature an exclusive interview with Matt entitled "The Mike Bannon-Denn No One Knows -- Or Wants To."***

* * * * * * * * * * *

Dear Dave Sim,

It looks like you're getting set to break my heart again, and with my own name this time. Whatever you do, don't stop. The Countess is a gem.

I've seduced some of my friends into becoming regular aardvark followers, but the biggest problem in spreading the addiction is that those who don't read Marvel and DC comics don't get all the comic book-in-jokes. Suggestions?

All the best to you, and to Deni, too.

*Micki (Michelle) Dupree*
*77 Grant Street, #2*
*Somerville, MA, 02145*

***Don't try to explain the in-jokes. Just tell them that Cootie is a jerk who thinks he's admired by everyone who meets him. Everyone knows someone like that, right?***

***As to breaking your heart, please come to Kitchener and I'll buy you dinner and take you dancing. I feel it's the least I can do for being such a cad.***

Dear Dave and Deni,

I'll bet you know that Cerebus was liked, loved, and the focus of thousands of fanatics - but I'll bet you didn't know he was being worshipped! Here's proof positive; photographs of the Tempie of Cerebus, at which hundreds worship the mighty earth-pig. Hard cold cash is, of course, the best insurance that your prayers will be heard... .

One of the Faithful.

*Eve Anemaet*
*1640 Akron,*
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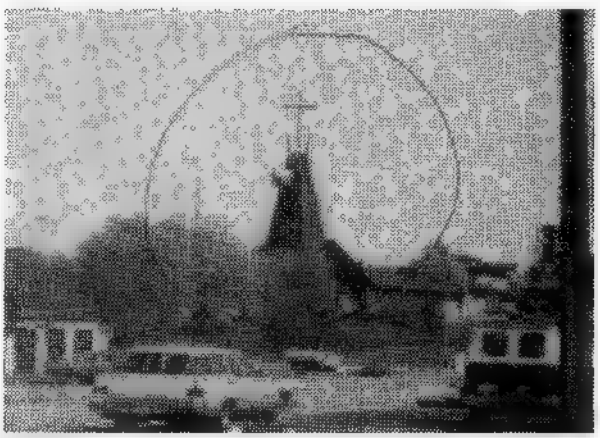

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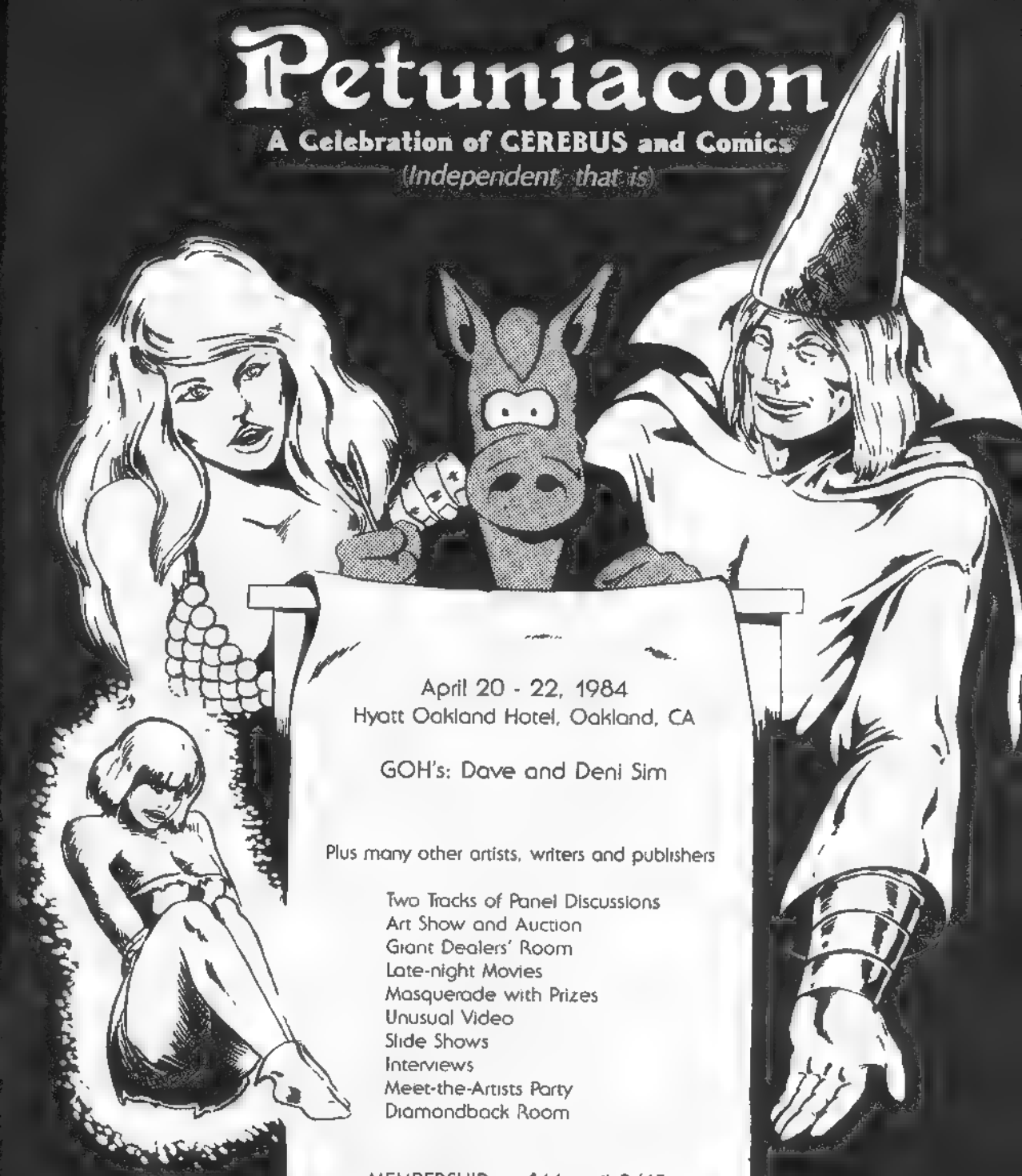
*(Independent, that is)*



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Dear Dave & Deni,

First, to start with the sublime before proceeding to the ridiculous.

I'm sorry to hear of your separation. Though I've never met you and have never written to you before this letter, I did read *Cerebus* from cover to cover, including the editorials and letters pages. From what I read, I liked the two of you very much. No mush, no mawkishness, just let me say that I pray this aspect of your life resolves itself with a minimum of pain, hurt, and misunderstanding.

Now to the aforementioned ridiculous.

Taking Deni's advice, I spent the last couple of days re-reading *Cerebus* from issue #1 to #55. The re-reading, particularly of the "High Society" continuity, opened up brand new insights and nuances to the characters and the plot. Indeed, when I first read "High Society" in monthly installments, a lot of the subtlety and passing references went by me because I was reading *Cerebus* in twenty-page installments. It was only when I dragged out the whole 25-part saga that I was able to fully appreciate the intricate tapestry you were weaving. Which means, I guess, that from now on, I'll have to re-read my entire *Cerebus* collection before reading any new issues. .

A few things came to mind when re-reading the "High Society" novel. First was an essay by Poul Anderson entitled "On Thud and Blunder," in which he bemoaned the preponderance of mighty thewed barbarian-warriors in fantasy fiction and wondered why nobody wrote fantasy that dealt with religious and political themes. I certainly hope somebody turns Mr. Anderson on to *Cerebus* as you've certainly created the most realistic fantasy world of any writer/artist I can think of. I mean, Melnibone' is all well and nice, but I can't possibly envision what their form of commerce and banking is.

Another thing about "High Society" that intrigued me was the parliamentary method of elections. Down here in the U.S., our system of voting is somewhat different than in Canada and the U.K. Losers in American elections are "outs" not "opposition leaders". There's no second place for a defeated American presidential candidate (which may reflect something on the nature of the American people, but we won't go into that).

Now, I'm aware that you were drawing a parrallel in Nixon with "High Society", yet I can't help wondering if there weren't more Canadian references that U.S. readers may have missed. I frequently have to explain subtle American references in novels and movies to my wife, who's Korean, since she's not wholly familiar with American history and culture. Perhaps a Canadian reader might point out some in-jokes we "fuhr-nuhrs" might have missed.

Finally, it's been the custom of letter writers to give you a list of questions they'd like answered and for you to weasle out of answering them through nebulous or evasive replies. This time I'd like to switch the tables on you — *I'll* supply the answers, you give us the questions.

(1) Issues #66, 67, and 69, but not 68.

(2) Lord Julius, Astoria, Jaka, and Theresa.

(3) No.

(4) Yo'mama.

Yours,

*Buzz Dixon*
*8961 Yolanda*
*Northridge, CA, 91324*

***I basically synthesized the Canadian and American electoral process in "High Society". They vote for the leader, not the local representative (American), but the two parties faced with each other in a parliamentary system after the election (Canadian). Your theory on "winners and losers" and "first and second place" is an interesting one, but I have to confess that I have always admired the U.S.'s ability to stalemate the executive branch with a Congress controlled by the other party. Even if you make the mistake of a wide majority every four years, the mid-term elections give you the opportunity to correct the mistake -dramatically, if the incumbent president has fumbled the ball for two years. The new Canadian constitution, removing as it does, the possibility (however remote) of the Governor-General and Her Majesty as the ultimate legislative force was parodied by the removal of Iest's Pontiff as the final arbiter. I view with alarm the indiscriminate use of closure (or cloture, actually) by our current government as a means of stifling debate and castrating the parliamentary process and the ease with which my country has been virtually changed from a parliamentary to a constitutional democracy by a simple electoral majority — a constitutional democracy without the checks and balances that usually make such-like workable in the long term.***

***(1) Can you tell us some issues that will be published after August in 1984 that won't have a November on-sale date?***

***(2) Can you tell us some of the characters names who won't be in Cerebus #58?***

***(3) Will you ever tell us who the Countess is based on?***

***(4) What did Denys Cowan say when you told him you wouldn't put him on the "freebie" list because he's black?***

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Dear Dave,

Somehow I sometimes get the feeling that only you understand what is going on - in the story, that is. I also believe you purposely intend to brainwash your readers. Most of whom "pretend" to "like" your "intelligent" comic strip in the manner rich people "like" caviar. Yuk. Fake. Stupid.

*Them Bones*
*119-B Hampton Road,*
*McDonough, GA., 30253*

***Yeah, I am the only one who knows what's going on. I don't purposely intend to brainwash my readers... I mean, it happens but I don't purposely intend it to. Comparing Cerebus to caviar I have no quarrel with whatsoever. Beats being compared to a Big Mac. Yuk, Fake, Stupid to you, too.***

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Dear Dave,

This letter is prompted by the one in Cerebus #55, re: Terry Austin. I too had found Cerebus entertaining but impossible to follow. I had only read an occasional issue and some where 'round #32, I gave up. I mean, the story was supposed to go on till #50! I went back to work and when I came out Cerebus was on #52 and the story had been wrapped up (more or less) and I figured I should see what all the fuss is about. So I borrowed a complete set of aardvarks from Tommy O's Lending Library and spent a week reading them all. Now I see what the fuss is about. It's fascinating to watch the growth and development of such a unique "one-man" show. And an excellent one at that, one of the few books I would recommend to my old pal Terry.

The thing I like best about Cerebus is your constant examination of the structure of politics and the way things work (or don't work). A nice dry sense of humor.

My only problem with the book is that it goes by too quickly. I would wait until I could read 3 or 4 at a time but since I'm on your comp. list I'm forced to read them as they come out. Problems. Problems... Keep up the great work. I hope things are going better for you than it sounds.

*Steve Leialoha*
*"Somewhere in San Francisco"*

***For those who may not know, Steve Leialoha is one of the foremost talents in comic books (just my opinion, but this is my letters page) pencilling, inking, writing, and colouring. We agreed to work on a story together when I'm in the San Francisco area next Spring. I'm hoping to get a Tommy O Library card while I'm there.***

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Dear Dave & Deni:

I have a minor criticism. You have both been guilty of the same grammatical error at least once each. I thought I'd take

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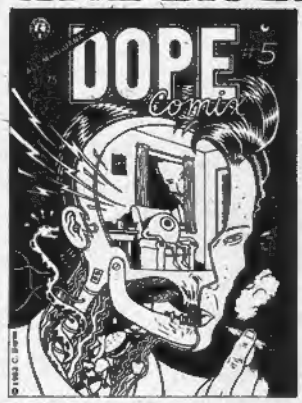


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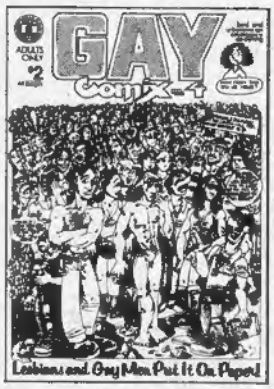

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Dear Comic Fan,

This letter is to announce the 3rd Annual Comic Fan Awards, the 1983 Koppy Awards. These awards are not sponsored by or affiliated with any professional publishing company or fanzine. In order to assure the largest possible participation, no fees will be charged for voting. These are the rules:

1. Eligible Voters: any comic fan
2. Eligible for Awards:
   a. Any comic story or cover published in a book or periodical dated 1983.
   b. Any comics-related dramatic presentation presented in 1983.
   c. Any person associated with the creation of comics.
3. Awards Given:
   a. Best Comic Short Story (1-12 pgs.) - Writing (Plot & Script)
   b. Best Comic Short Story (1-12 pgs.) - Art (Pencils & Inks)
   c. Best Comic Short Story (1-12 pgs.) - Coloring
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   m. Best Cover Drawing
   n. Best Cover Painting
   o. Best Dramatic Presentation (TV, movies, radio, plays, etc.)
   p. Hall of Fame Award for Outstanding Career Achievement (current members: Will Eisner, Wally Wood)
4. Vote for 5 choices or fewer in each category, in order of preference. If you feel no award should be given in a category, vote "No Award". If you feel unqualified to vote in a category, vote "Don't Know".
5. To vote in a category, give the name of the story, along with the title of the book or the issue number.
6. For best cover, give the book title or issue number. For best dramatic presentation, give the name of the drama.
7. For continued stories (e.g., in the "Best Novel" category), give the story title and book title or issue number of only the first and last parts. Continued stories are eligible if any part is in a publication dated 1983.
8. For a copy of the results, send a SASE plus 30 cents with your ballot.
9. Balloting closes March 31, 1984.
10. Results will be sent to all mass distribution comic and fanzine publishers.
11. Send your ballot to:
    David Craven
    1903 Maxwell
    Ames, IA 50010

a moment and point it out, not out of malice, but because if I had axle grease on my cheek I'd want to know about it. Here's your smudge: Issue 54, page 8, "I hadn't seen her since she and Lord Julius stayed here with The Count and *I* just before they got divorced." It ought to be "me". It is objective case. A simple test would be to try the sentence without the count. It immediately becomes obvious that you want the word "me". I wondered briefly if you're foreshadowing a revelation that The Countess is only pretending to be royalty and that she has really been elevated from a lower station, but I suspect not. It might be a good way to justify your blunder though.

Sorry to pick on you, I thought you'd want to be aware of it.

I love the comic book. It is my favorite ever since I read the first one (#4 or thereabouts).

I also enjoy Aardvark-Vanaheim's other publications.

*Ken Rasmussen*
*1324 Humboldt St.,*
*Bellingham, Wa., 98225*

***There are drawbacks to having literate fans. Thanks for wiping the smudge off my cheek, Ken.***

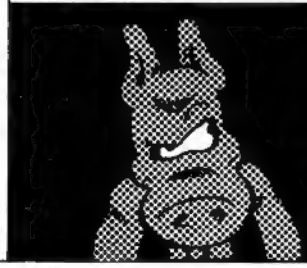
★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

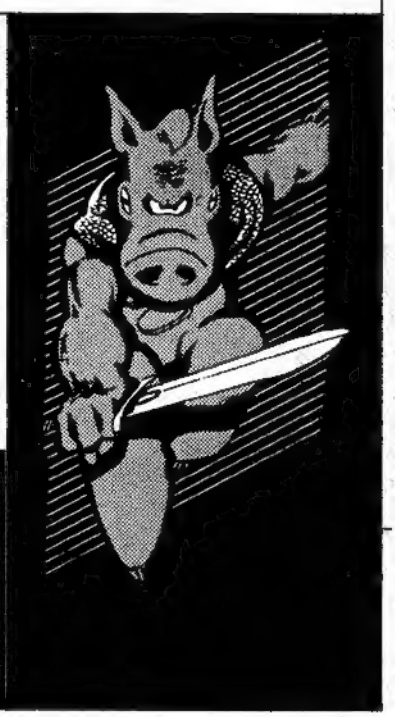
Dear Dave,

Re: The picture on the bottom of the first page of the letter column in issue #54 -- That's Derek and Rob McCulloch from left to right.

*Jill and Karen Weber*
*founders and co-chaircreatures*
*Derek & Rob McCulloch Fan Club*
*7092 Moonlight Cir.,*
*Huntington Beach, Ca., 92647*

***Anyone interested in starting a Jill and Karen Weber Fan Club?***





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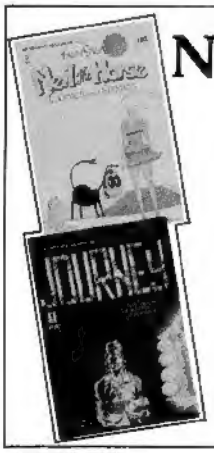


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